

SUMMARIUM

SCHOOL-BOOK POLICY

School-book policy took always a favoured place in educational policy of Hungary. In the Hungarian educational system in the period of 1867 there existed a system of more school-books – however a state permission was always necessary to declare a school-book. Study of *PÉTER SZEBENYI* gives a detailed of school-book alternatives decreased, the thirties forecast the era of one-school-book – justified by social and political reasons – that took place after 1945 and especially 1949. Despite, in the thought of the very recent past the world before 1945 appeared as the multi-coloured world of school-books. Among historical-conservative-minded people this “Hungarian model” provided just as much illusion as the “Anglo-Saxon model”, the “school-book market” had among the liberal-minded education researchers. The latter thought that free publishing of school-books, free decision of teachers can solve the school-book problem.

School-book publishing of fifties was based on translating soviet school-books. From the beginning of sixties until the seventies in the mechanism of school-book approval predominated the balance of the current state background institution for developing curriculum, the state school-book publisher and the ministry. This represented a kind of logic beyond subject. The content of school-books was influenced by one more fact – the international relations, the international harmonising of school-books. About instructive – and considered to be continued – history of that we can read in the study of *OTTÓ SZABOLCS*.

In the course of the reform of 1978 – as the educational government and the background institute rapidly lost their respect – the earlier started forging ahead of the professional science in the approval mechanism continued further. In the last decade the “school-book profession” tried to emancipate itself from professional sciences, and at the same time opposed the “dictatorship of methodologists”. In the course of the change of regime almost every group of interest realised that approval of school-books – and withdrawal of already permitted school-books has a big political importance. The State School-book Publisher just before the law came out, had 80 books revised to clean them from the party state flourishes (the place of which took often national, conservative flourishes).

One government decision of 1991 wanted the market to get place in school-book publishing; though the approval of the ministry, the school-book declaration remains. To manage authority functions, a school-book and school-equipment office of the ministry was created at once, experts of which qualified the books. This period was characterised by scandals connected with the ideologically delicate subjects. In January of 1993 – with the decision of the Constitutional Court condemning the point of the ministry, whereas state schools must be ideologically neutral, which led also to the resignation of the minister – the ministry visibly looked for a more normative and less provocative solution. The right of suggesting school-book approval was passed to a council of teaching plans school-book and school-equipment, members of which were practising teachers.

In the debate on the educational policy the modifications of socialists and free-democrats wished to cancel the right of the minister of culture and public education to include into the school-book register, that was suggested by the governing coalition, and they wanted to give the right of the decision to the hand of the Council, too. According to the law of 1993 regulating the order of declaring school-books remained the right of the ministry, the decree about that came out later essentially without asking those who were concerned.

The viewpoint of the political parties also differed in the question of whose is the right of choosing a school-book. According to the opinion of the young-democrats it depends on the common decision of the teaching staff, as the school-books in the study process create a system connected to each other and they are not separated by subjects, while according to the viewpoint of the free-democrats

and socialists the restriction existing in the original proposal – declaring the hearing of the teaching staff – also should be abolished as it hurts the individual freedom of the teacher and he may practice it with the consent of the teaching staff.

Before the change of the regime the conflict on the content of school-books was characterised by the conflict of teacher's and scientific respects, and by the conflict of the younger and academical scientists. After 1990 in connection with the history school-books arose the conflict of politicians and scientists. The government that tried to ensure its legitimisation by praising Hungary between the two world war and by presenting the decades after 1945 undifferentiated, had an earlier approved school-book written by prominent scientists taken off from the school-book catalogue, and on the other hand enforced an other one in connection with which arose serious scientific objections. Scandals concerning the statements of this school-book have been waving in the daily papers for months. "The school-book that was made with the support of the ministry has to suit certain ideological expectations" – told the spokesman of the ministry in this debate. Conflicts in connection with the content of the school-books on social sciences are presented by the study of *PÉTER TIBOR NAGY*, the paradigmatic conflicts concerning school-books on natural sciences are presented by *ISTVÁN NAHALKA*.

The order of financing and distribution of school-books in the decades of the party-state worked in accordance with the rules of a deficiency economy – planned economy. As the school-books had to be sold on the prices valid in 1957, the increase in the number of school-book types raised the related state expenses even more quickly than the inflation. The distributor was paid by the publisher, there worked no kind of interest system. At the same time nobody had economy interest, as, according to the meaning, the school-book writers were interested in enlargement of the number and volume of school-books, the publisher had a normative profit also on the losing school-books.

In contradiction to publishing one school-book on general knowledge, professional school-books were characterised by divided publishing in accordance with the particularly divided professional training – as it is represented by the study of *ÉVA TÓT* –, and there is an oppressive shortage of school-books in professional training today. In university education the situation is also special: here constantly dominates publishing of lecture notes instead of school-books. The aim of the institutions is not really to create relevant, everywhere usable school-books – but to protect particular institutional disunity. The authors write usually neither on base of market considerations nor with the intention to create a text-book, but to strengthen their scientific legitimisation, to compensate the lack of other publishing possibilities – as it is presented by *TAMÁS KOZMA*.

Going back to the system of school-book financing, the practice also at the beginning of the change of regime was that the Ministry of Finance transferred the money directly to the School-book Publisher leaving out the ministry. Therefore the ministry – so that to protect the control over its own sphere – became interested in the solution that the money should be given not to the publisher but through the ministry to the schools and through them to the students. Trade-union's critic considers the system unacceptable on social basis as it took away the possibility of differentiation from the municipality responsible for the social equalisation.

In some years more hundred publishers and institutions, whose main profile is not publishing, entered into school-book publishing as it is presented by the study of *JÁNOS KARLOVITZ*. Interviews give proof about the problems of publishers. The reform of school-book publishing however remained unsuccessful, improving school-book supply did not join to the considerably increased offer and prices – as it is shown in *ZOLTÁN GYÖRGY*'s study.

Among the opponents of the "clear market logic" appeared also the county pedagogical institutions dealing with professional consultation, extension training. They suggested to exclude from school-book market those publishers who refuse to be presented in demonstration places (supported by county pedagogical institutions) and do not undertake organisation continuous selling in book-shops. The large-sized competition of the Ministry of Culture and Public Education for purchasing books also effected against the "clear marker".

It seems to be state-able that for establishment of such school-book freedom – school-book market that was expected by many people in the end of eighties and the beginning of nineties, there was no possibility in the recent years and is not likely in the near future. The reasons are as follows.

The Hungarian market – mainly because of the very low number of students in schools giving maturity certificate – cannot bear so many publishers as exists on the market today. However the big part of small publishers are the means of intellectual self-expression, therefore their sustentation remains within reasonable time the interest of foundations, associations having different ideological and political commitments and following no market considerations.

The still viable of school-book publishing (at the same time possibly the fusion of the little ones) will be determined – “instead of the market” – by the fact whether the curriculum-politic and sectoral liability – guarantying penetrability and coherence of the system – of the free-democrat-socialist government (being in power since the summer of 1994) declares or not and how much “strictly” that on the list of school-books supported by the state only those school-book packages have place that cover the entirety or at least a several-year-long period of a subject, and enterprises with one book – no.

The simple utilitarian considerations for coming out of school-books generally also in the future will not be enough, foundations, funds, professional organisations, associations, etc. belonging to different sphere of interest ensure further – in accordance with their ideological, political, group interests – that there let be further school-book authors and school-books.

Knowing the nature, the level of generalisation of the National Core Curriculum, it is hopeless to discuss the decision of “scientific questions”, “paradigm questions” at the stage of curriculum. As a result of this fact professional-political-scientific forces will keep on battling on the content of the school-book. These battles will permanently ensure that certain scientific groups and press organs will discuss certain school-books, praising or condemning them, following by all means political, professional-political, scientific-political and not “market-advertising” logic.

Since the summer of 1994 the ministry directed by free-democrat educational minister would perhaps prefer the direction where sooner or later school-book approval process would be no more necessary. Beside the above mentioned reasons, this is impossible also because the educational law prescribes objectivity, the multi-sided approach, and this together with the basic value of guarantying ideological neutrality makes practically unavoidable for the ministry to control in any way – either through buffer- or professional organisations, but undertaking political responsibility for the mechanism – what kind of school-books are supported at public expense.

Summarised, we have to express our conviction that school-book approval, school-book content, school-book publishing in the next years and decades will be the business of not (only) the “sellers” and “buyers” but the different actors of educational policy will be concerned also in the future.

(text of Péter Tibor Nagy – translated by Márta Stern)

LEHRBUCHPOLITIK

Die ungarische Bildungspolitik widmete dem Thema Lehrbücher schon immer besondere Aufmerksamkeit. Um die Zeit des Ausgleichs zwischen Österreich und Ungarn (1867) gab es jeweils mehrere Lehrbücher, die aber vom Staat genehmigt werden mußten. Darüber berichtet *PÉTER SZEBENYI* in einer detaillierten Studie. Nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg nahm die Zahl der Alternativausgaben ab, und in den dreißiger Jahren deutete sich bereits die Epoche des – mit sozialen und politischen Argumenten untermauerten – sog. Einbuch-Unterrichts an, der dann 1945 und vor allem nach 1949 verwirklicht wurde. Dennoch hielt man die Zeit vor 1945 bis in die jüngste Vergangenheit für eine Welt der Lehrbuch-Vielfalt. Diesem “ungarischen Modell” hafteten im historisch-konservativen Gedankengut ebenso viele Illusionen an wie dem “angelsächsischen Modell”, dem “Lehrbuchmarkt” im Kreise der liberalen Bildungsforscher. Letztere meinten, daß die “Befreiung” der Lehrbuchedition, die freie Entscheidung der Pädagogen das Problem lösen werde.

In den Fünfzigern basierte die Verlagstätigkeit auf der Übersetzung sowjetischer Vorlagen. In den nächsten zwanzig Jahren stand der Genehmigungsmechanismus im Zeichen des Gleichgewichts